

## Durham Research Online

---

### Deposited in DRO:

12 July 2013

### Version of attached file:

Published Version

### Peer-review status of attached file:

Unknown

### Citation for published item:

Mughal, M. A. Z. (2008) 'Book review of 'Days on the family farm : from the Golden Age through the Great Depression' by Carrie A. Meyer, Cambridge : University of Minnesota Press, 2007.', JASAT : Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas., 39 . pp. 98-99.

### Further information on publisher's website:

<http://www.asatexas.org/jasat.html>

### Publisher's copyright statement:

### Additional information:

---

### Use policy

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a [link](#) is made to the metadata record in DRO
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the [full DRO policy](#) for further details.

the decisions made by those in power. Through extensive historical background information and innumerable examples of dissenters in America, Mayers demonstrates that "the creation and maintenance of US power have taken place not only at the level of economic military tectonic, but also upon the field of colliding ideas and uneasy conscience" (8).

Mayers' detailed attention to research and varied areas of dissention in American tradition illustrate that not all citizens were comfortable with America's worldwide domination. These oppositions had varied results, including "the right even in wartime to challenge national policy" (55), "a regime of economic utility (NAFTA)," (137), "[a] new attitude [allowing] the United States to maintain a multitude of diverse peoples in its borders" (189), and "a global US involvement that wove unsurpassed military power with economic preeminence" (313). Mayer then connects the past to the current status in modern day America. He concludes that "An underclass composed of millions of people, faltering educational attainments, increasingly rigid class stratification, ballooning federal deficits, and a failed public health system" (332) are all concerns for today's non-conformists. Because America is in such disarray, dissenters are more important than ever in voicing the need for change.

Mayers' comprehensive research, varied chapters, and numerous notes provide an abundance of knowledge and reinforce that dissenters were, and continue to be, an integral part of America's evolution. His work is a collection of significant events in American history that are underscored by the people who bravely fought against simply accepting what government officials deemed appropriate for their constituents. The author's enthusiasm for the topic is obvious throughout the book, and this makes for a more enjoyable read. Overall, Mayers' work will be beneficial to history scholars or those readers who desire a better understanding of dissenters, who are rarely discussed but greatly influence(d) the future of America.

JENNIFER KOZAR

Baylor University

---

Meyer, Carrie A. *Days On The Family Farm: From The Golden Age Through The Great Depression*. U of Minnesota P, 2007. 424 pages. \$54.00 cloth ISBN-10: 0-8166-5032-2. \$17.95 paper ISBN-10: 0-8166-5033-0.

Meyer, Associate Professor in Economics at George Mason University, in *Days On The Family Farm* recapitulates the times of the Golden Age of Agriculture, the Great Depression and the two World Wars with reference to economic setting and community life



on a Midwestern family farm in America from the beginning of the twentieth century to World War II through the daily diary of a farmwife May Lyford Davis.

May and her husband Elmo married on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1901 lived on the family farm at Guilford Township, Winnebago County, Illinois where May kept her daily diary, not merely the personal notes, and ledgers of financial deals which provide the picture of community life and the activities of commercial farming in first half of the twentieth century in a chronological order. It can be regarded as an analytical historical account on the changing social and technological conditions in American agriculture.

*Days On The Family Farm*, transcribing the chronicle of May, is an informative story unfolding the past of Midwestern farm life on cultivating and selling crops in agricultural markets, buying the goods of household and farm use, introduction of heavy machinery for agriculture to produce the market crops, developing roads network for better transportation, tractor replacing the horse drawn plow, and coming of electricity, automobiles, radio, incubators and other modern facilities of that time. It also discovers the local knowledge about environmental conditions linking it with farming practices. It tells us the stories of births and deaths, prosperity and poor economic situations, droughts and the days of Great Depression, and the impacts of world wars on farming. It has also touched, though not in greater detail, the important issues of children and women contribution to agriculture, and the family dynamics in a larger context of change, for instance, women participation in public policy and elections as voters after the World War I.

Meyer, grew up on an Illinois farm, has skillfully narrated the events and studied the accounts from May's diary not only from Midwestern but also from a broader American perspective. This has made the book an imperative piece of American agricultural and rural history of its own kind providing an opportunity to bear in mind the past trends to analyze the present. It will be helpful for those interested to study the history of commercial farming, agriculture before and after the world wars, relationship between technology and agriculture, and community life on the family farm.

MUHAMMAD AURANG ZEB MUGHAL  
Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan

---

Rogers, William Warren, Jr. *A Scalawag in Georgia: Richard Whiteley and the Politics of Reconstruction*. University of Illinois Press, 2007. 288 pages. \$40.00 cloth, ISBN-10 0252031601.

William Warren Rogers Jr., a professor of history at Gainesville